MRS. BASCOM'S THINGS.

It was the day before Mrs. Bascom's sale and the accumulation for forty years was waiting for it. Forty years is a long time—long enough for the rootlets of a human heart to strike deep and take firm hold. Mrs. Bascom was thinking this as she walked around the yard for the last time. She stopped by a branching maple and laid a caressing hand upon it.

"We planted this tree that first spring," she said softly to herself. "It wasn't more than a foot high—and we've grown here together ever since. Ah, me, it's hard to transplant old trees."

But there was no help for it. She knew that. When Col. Bascom died it became absolutely necessary to break up the home. John, the only son, lived near, but he could not give up his nice new house to go back to the old place. Sally, the daughter, lived in St. Louis. Her husband was a prosperous merchant, and, of course, moored. So there was nothing left for Mrs. Bascom but to "break up" and live with her children.

The question of where Sally had settled in her own decisive fashion.

"Of course mother will live with me," she said. "The daughter—not the daughter-in-law—is the proper one to have the care of the parents when they are old."

Mrs. Bascom shrank a little at this frank avowal of filial obligation. She was an active woman of sixty. She had not thought to need "caring for" for ten years or more.

Her daughter-in-law was sitting next to her. She took the withered hand in hers and stroked it gently.

"As Sally says, a daughter has the first claim," she said tenderly; "but I am sure mother knows that we would be glad to have her." And somehow Mrs. Bascom felt comforted.

Sally settled the details of breaking up in the same summary manner. It was her way of doing things.

"We'll just make a clean sweep, mother,' she said. "There's nothing worth saving, and we'll sell them all."

Mrs. Bascom was taking things out of the bureau drawers.

"Don't you think I'd better take the bureau with me, daughter?" she asked, a little anxiously. It was a mahogany chest of drawers without casters.

"Oh, my, no, mother! I wouldn't have that lumbering old thing around for anything. I have a handsome antique oak dresser in your room, and a chiffonier to match. You'll have all the drawer space you can possibly use."

Mrs. Bascom was opening and shutting the empty drawers aimlessly.

"I've had this bureau for forty years," she said, as if to herself. "We bought it when we went to housekeeping. I suppose it *is a little old-fashioned*"—*there* was a touch of wounded feeling in her voice—"but it was considered a fine piece of furniture in its day. The top drawer was father's, and the second drawer was the one I kept my baby clothes in. I can just see Joan's little linen-cambric shirts, trimmed with thread edging, now! Sally, it seems like I would hate to sell this bureau."

"I'll take it, mother, and keep it for you," said Lizzie, quietly.

"Why, Lizzie," remonstrated her sister-in-law, "you haven't any room for it."

"I'll make room," said Mrs. John Bascom, a little curtly.

The old lady was not much help. Every article in the house was full of tender memories to her, and as she went from one to another, sitting a moment in "father's chair," and touching this thing and that, she was clearly giving a good-by to them all. Such a hold inanimate things will get upon the affections.

"You wouldn't have any use for this new rag carpet, would you, daughter?"

"None in the world, mother."

"I didn't know but you might put it in the back part of the house. I took a heap of pains with this carpet, and nearly the last thing father did was to bring it home from the weaver's. He took such an interest in it when I was making it, father did. You don't think you had better put it down in my room, do you, Sally?"

"Oh, no, mother; it wouldn't be in keeping with anything in the room. And then I've just put down a new body Brussels. I don't feel that there is anything too good for my mother," affectionately.

Mrs. Bascom smiled back bravely, but she looked wistfully at the carpet, after all.

And so it went.

The things were all sold, and when Mrs. Bascom started for St. Louis with her earthly belongings packed in a new trunk, she was as stripped and desolate an old woman as ever swallowed her tears and smiled. It was as a grapevine had been prepared for transplanting by carefully shaking the earth from its roots and clipping its tendrils neatly away.

They did not hear from her often. Sally has said she would have all the time there was now to write letters, but letter-writing—for pleasure—had been crowded out of her busy country life, and when leisure came she was too old to form a new habit.

Mrs. John Bascom went down to St. Louis at the time of the fair, nearly a year after the breaking up. She stayed three weeks.

The night she came back she had a plain talk with her husband.

"John," she said in answer to his inquiries, "mother is dying of homesickness! She never makes a complaint, but she is just as unhappy as she can be—I know she is."

"Why, Lizzie," John Bascom raised a shocked face. "You don't mean that Sally isn't good to mother?"

"Sally is just as good to mother as she can be; that is, she is as good to her as she knows how to be. But, John, Sally has no more understanding of old people's feelings than I have of—French art. It is like this: Sally wants mother to have an easy time; so she takes her out of an active country life, full of cares for other people, and puts her in her own far-away city home, where there is not a familiar object, and where she has absolutely nothing to do.

"Then she expects her to be happy. And it isn't human nature to be—at least it isn't in old people's nature.'

"I wish you could see mother's room, John—Brussels carpet, lace curtains, elegant rugs and a folding bed. And mother is horribly afraid of that bed—thinks she is going to be folded up in it some night. She wanted Sally to give her a bedstead, but Sally said this matched the set, and was perfectly safe. So mother goes to bed in fear and trembling every night.

"Then, of course, it has a mattress; gets so cold in the night that her bones just ache, and she lies there and thinks how good it would feel to have the feathers come up around her back. Isn't that pitiful, John? You know, she always slept on feathers. I spoke to Sally about it, and told her I would get you to send her feather bed right down. But Sally was quite stiff about it—said she didn't think it best for mother to sleep on feathers—it was not healthy.

"And then the next day she went down town and bought a down quilt for mother's bed — paid $20 for it. Wasn't that more like her? Sally wants mother to be happy, but she wants her to be happy in her way."

John Bascom got up excitedly.

"I'll send that feather bed to mother to-morrow," he said, "and write to Sally to get her a decent Christian bedstead to match her set, and I'll pay for it."

"Oh, no, you won't, John. Mother wouldn't have you do it for the world. But she misses her things, I know. We were on the street one day and passed by a second-hand store. I noticed that mother had stopped, and I went back. She was standing there looking at the sheet-iron stove, and the tears were running down her cheeks. 'Oh, Lizzie, she said, 'this is just like my old "Evening Star."'

John Bascom blew his nose vigorously.

"But, John," contiued his wife, "it isn't just the *things* that mother *misses*—it is the home feeling. Without meaning to do it, Sally never lets her lose sight of the fact that she is living in her house. Old people like to potter around the house and feel that they are of use. Sally never will let her mother do a thing. She says the servants are there to do the work, and she wants her to rest. And so she rests until she is tired to death. She says she just longs sometimes to get hold of a dishpan full of dishes.

"Sally had told me before about mother's putting on a gingham apron and going into the kitchen the first Monday morning to do the dishes, and let the girl go at the washing, and how she had had to tell her plainly that she never let anybody interfere with the servants' work. Think of making her feel that she was interfering, when she wanted to help.

"One day I was sewing in her room. She began cutting the scraps into carpet rags—from sheer force of habit, I could see. 'I've been doing this all my life,' she said, when I laughed, 'and I forgot. It is second nature, I suppose, and I love to do it. I have a nice lot of white rags that I can't bear to throw away, because they would *make somebody* such good carpet rags.' 'Get them out,' I said, 'and sew them for my carpet. They are just what I need.'

"John, you ought to have seen how interested she was. In ten minutes we were in the midst of billows of carpet rags and an animated discussion of dyes. Just then Sally walked in.

"Why, mother," she said, "what in the world are you doing?"

"'I'm just making some carpet rags for Lizzie, daughter," mother said, deprecatingly.

"'I think I wouldn't do that sort of work, here, she said. "The fuzz gets in the carpet, and Lizzie doesn't really want them, I know."

"You ought to have seen mother's face change—every bit of interest faded out of it. I felt so porvoked at Sally. She put the rags away and said, "I won't do it, if you think I'd better not, daughter. I hadn't anything else to do.'

"And, John, Sally went down the next day and got a table cover and some rope silk and filosele, and I don't know what all, and gave them to mother, and told her she thought she would find that much nicer than sewing rags! And so poor mother, whose hands are trained to knitting and darning, and mending, is laboring now with filosele, and yearning for carpet rags!"

And John Bascom's heart was yearning for his mother.

"Lizzie," he said, with a man's helplessness, "what can we do?"

"I've thought it all out, John."

John brigthened. He had great confidence in his wife's resources.

"We'll write and ask mother to come and spend the winter with us. I arranged that before I left. And then, if it is as I think, and mother is happier here than there, we'll just keep her—and Sally can't help herself. In that way it will be pleasantly settled, and nobody will have any *feeling*."

How easy and natural it seemed.

"I'll go down and see her myself," John said. "I'm going to Jefferson City next week, anyway."

And so it was settled.

A few hours later, as Mr. Bascom was sinking into slumber, his wife wide awake, asked, "John, who bought mother's old 'Evening Star?'"

"Why-y, Mr. Sam Driscoll, I think. I'm not sure. The book will show."

"What book?"

"Why the account book that the sales were put down in."

"Oh, of course! Where is it?"

"In the lower part of the bookcase, with my papers. Why?"

"Oh, nothing. Go to sleep."

A week later John Bascom started for St. Louis. He was to be gone for four days. These were busy days for Mrs. Bascom. They had decided to give up the bed room downstairs, and she was "fixing it up." "Old people don't like to sleep upstairs," she had said.

During the week she had made sundry trips in her buggy, and after Mr. Bascom had gone she had started off with the "big wagon" and the hired man. When she returned one day one would have thought she was going to start a second-hand furniture store.

The afternoon of the fourth day drew to a close. Lizzie was putting the finishing touches to the room.

"They'll be here in a minute," she said. "I'll just have time to loop these curtains, and then all will be done," and she looked around approvingly. Well might she approve. It was the fac simile of Mother Bascom's old room.

On the floor was a rag carpet that "father took such an interest in"—bright as when it was made. It had been on Lizzie's darkened spare room.

In one corner was the old mahogany bureau, and in the other a walnut bedstead, with high, soft feather bed and home-made counterpane. Near the stove stood an old, old wash-stand, painted to imitate mahogany, with a grayish, mottled top supposed to represent marble. There was a hole in it for the bowl. Over by the window was a small cherry table. A worn copy of the Testament and Psalms lay on it.

It was a chilly afternoon in early November, and a cheerful fire crackled in—was it?—yes, it was really—Mrs. Bascom's old "Evening Star." Two chairs were in front of the stove—one a low split-bottomed rocker, painted green and the other a big brown wooden one. It was "father's chair."

Lizzie had looped the last curtain and was surveying it critically. "Dotted muslin would have been prettier," said she, "but the bleached cotton was what mother had. And here they come."

They let her rest awhile in the sitting room before taking her to her room. When she entered it her eyes fell on the carpet.

"Why, Lizzie," she said, "ain't this my carpet? Why"—she was looking around the room now—"Lizzie, there are my things—that were sold. Where did you get them?" Her voice was tense and almost stern.

"I bought them back, mother. They were all in the neighborhood, and everybody was glad to let me have them when they knew what I wanted them for. I thought you would feel more at home if you had them—don't you like them, mother?" a little *anxiously*.

Mrs. Bascom had dropped into a chair and covered her eyes with her hand. She looked up now with tears streaming down her cheeks.

"Like them?" she said. "Why, child, I've just longed for these things. I didn't know how my heart was bound to them or I never would have let them go. I've tried to make myself feel how childish it was, and I never told a soul how I felt, but, oh, Lizzie, I've been so homesick for my things Lizzie, I've been so homesick for my things!"

She went from one thing to another with the delight of a child.

"How good that bed will feel this winter," she said. "And here's my little stand table, too, and—Lizzie, ain't that my Testament?"

"Yes'm. It was in one of those drawers when the table was sold, and we never knew it."

"And Sally thought she had burned it up. She bought me a nice Oxford Bible, with a lot of maps and Paul's missionary journeys in it, but when people get old they don't seem to care so much about studying the Bible as about reading it. And this has so many passages marked. Here's the text Sister Ann's funeral sermon was preached from—and father's—and my little Henry's. Oh, I'm glad to get this Testament back."

They were sitting around the fire later.

"Mother," said John; "I hope you haven't forgotten how to knit. I've been thinking how good a pair of your warm socks would feel these cold mornings."

Mrs. Bascom turned eagerly to her daughter. "Is there any yarn in the house, Lizzie?"

"Maybe I can find some," said Lizzie, mendaciously. She had bought some the day before in anticipation of this. "I'll look to-morrow."

"I'll have you a pair by the last of the week, son. I've seen the time when I could turn off my sock in a day, but I reckon I'm a little out of practice, now."

"John, you needn't put mother at work quite so soon. I want her to help me with my blue stripe first."

"Haven't you colored that stripe yet?"

"N'm. I don't know how."

"John," said his mother, briskly, "get me some Prussian blue to-morrow, and we'll go right at it." Filoselle had been hard to manage, but she was on familiar ground now.

Lizzie went about her supper after awhile, and the two were left together.

"So you like it, do you, mother?" said John, seeing her glance rest lovingly on the familiar objects.

Mrs. Bascom had laid a trembling hand in his.

"John," she said, brokenly, "I don't feel like I ever could leave this room."

His hand closed on hers.

"You never shall," he said. "This is your home from now on."

John Bascom went to town the next day and did not return until nearly night. When he came he went directly to his mother's room. The door was ajar. She was sitting in the twilight, rocking gently. Under the table was a ball of finished carpet rags. She had been reading and the open Testament lay on her lap. A gray sock, well into the leg, had slipped to the floor.

She did not hear him. She was singing softly to the tune of Hebron:

Thus far the Lord hath led me on,
Thus far his care prolongs my days,
And every evening shall make known
Some fresh memorial of his grace.

It was her old twilight hymn.

He closed the door gently and went to Lizzie.

"Yes," she said, when he told her about it. "Mother had one happy day, anyway. I can see that she is glad to get back to the old neighborhood.

"Lizzie," said John, suddenly, "how did you happen to have that yarn here? You don't knit."

"How did you happen to want yarn socks?" she retorted. "You don't wear them."

Then they both laughed.

"What do you suppose mother said about you last night?" he asked.

"What did she say?" said Lizzie, curiously.

"She said, 'John, you have a good wife, and she's got a heap of feeling.'"

"And what did you say?" she asked, archly, but with brimming eyes.

"I said, 'She has so,'" he answered, emphatically.

And then John Bascom did what he did not often do except when he came home from the St. Louis fair—he kissed his wife.—Caroline H. Stanley, in the Independent.

FRENCH RECEPTION TOILETTE FROM HARPER'S BAZAR

Some of the reception costumes are exceedingly showy and effective this autumn. The gown illustrated by our cut and taken from Harper's Bazar is particularly smart. It is embroidered with silver and gold spangles, put around lozenge-shaped bits of blue mirror velvet, and Nile-green satin on the short jacket, which opens to show a front of Nile-green satin partially covered with a necktie of embroidered net. The skirt and sleeves of this gown are of broche silk, a blue with large silver leaves. This design is from la Compagnie Lyonnaise, Paris.

To wear with the gown is a hat from Marescot. It is of velvet plisse, trimmed with orange velvet and gold buckle, an aigrette, and black plumes.

BOTH WAYS.

"Come on, old man, you're drunk."
"Me frien,' to 'rest me would be manifestly unjust. When a feller teh 'flicted with alcohol craze he takeah th' gold cure. I've been 'flicted with Klondikeh gold craze an' took th' alcohol cure. It'sh a blamed poor rule that won' worksh both ways."

Algernon O'Flaherty—Awrevaw, Evangeline O'Hoolihan, aw revaw. I go ter seek de golden Klondike nugget. Be true, my only own, an' I'll skate fer home an' claim yer as me bride es soon es I can place at yer feet de wealth of Monty Cristy.

HE KNEW BEANS, ANY WAY.

Richmond Times: At Centerville, Ky., the other day, Captain J. R. Hindman, nominee of the sound money Democracy of that state for the position of clerk of the court of appeals, got into an argument with a silver man, who claimed that good prices did not prevail.

"Why, don't you admit that wheat is high?" he was asked.

"Yes," he answered.

"And are not cattle high?"

"Yes."

"And is not tobacco high?"

"Yes."

"And is not corn high?"

"Yes," was his reply.

"Are not sheep high?"

"Yes."

"Are not hogs high?"

"Yes," drawled the silver man, "but *green beans is selling awful low; a* farmer sold me a peck for a dime today."

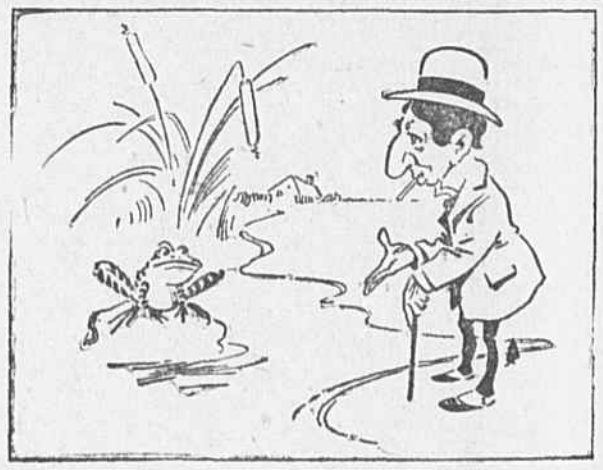
ON THE BAY.

"Say, Chilly, don't you wisht all dis water wuz rum?"
"Naw."
"Cause why?"
"Cause it 'ud be bay rum."

SADLY SMITTEN.

Harry—Why have you stopped visiting Miss Silversides? I thought you had been badly *struck by her beauty.*
Adolphus—No, I was struck by her father.

CHOLLY COMMENTS ON NATURE.



1—By gawge, what a queeah hahmless ewetchure a fwag.

2—Haw gwaceful ft jumps.

3—Thundah!!!